

circumcision, ordeals, dancing, license, and distribution of wealth. In 1884 575
the Nanga ceremonies were no longer performed.

Moto's is the only known evidence of the occurrence of the Nanga outside
the area mapped by Fison. No stone enclosures such as those described by [349]
Fison were found in Lau. (For further information concerning the Nanga
see Brewster, 1, pp. 93-95.)

LUVE NI WAI

The Luve ni Wai (Offspring of the Water) is a secret cult found in many
parts of Fiji. (See Brewster, 1, pp. 89, 222-225; Williams, 27, vol. 1, pp. 237-
239.) It is one medium by which individuals, disgruntled at the new social 557
order, can gain social prestige in the community. The colonial government 618
has attempted to suppress the cult, hence the natives usually deny knowledge
of it. One form of the cult is practiced today in southern Lau. A few in-
formants gave the following account of it.

The cult consists of a few young men, each of whom has demonstrated his ability 778
to procure and hold a personal guardian god who supplies him with mana. The mana is
expressed in the form of a special gift, such as the ability to create new dance forms
or medicines, to predict the future, interpret the past, or discover new members for the
cult. The guardian gods called *luve ni wai* are usually the ghosts of departed ancestors,
not spirits, and are today called "devils." 776
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Some informants say they dwell in and near the water, others say they live
on land, in water, stars, sky, in fish and trees. Ndengei, Tutumatia, Nda-
uthina, Ndakuwangga, Rayawa, and Vuthurongayau are important *luve ni wai*.

The following tale is told about Ndakuwangga, the shark god, who became
a *luve ni wai*:

Ndaunisai was the father of Wangganouanoua, who came with Ndaunisai from Viti
Levu to Kambara. Wangganouanoua went to Mbenau Island at Taveuni. When the
people of the island were hauling a canoe from the shore to the water, Wangganouanoua
hid in a hollow tree trunk because he wanted to show the people he was a god. While
the god was in the tree trunk, it was used as a roller for the canoe. When Wangganou-
anoua went aboard the canoe and told the men he had been inside the hollow trunk, they
called him Ndakuwangga. He entered a shark. The people began to pray to this god
of the shark and called it *luve ni wai* because it was from the water. Since then the
shark had been tabu to the Taveuni people. The Kambara people do not eat the shark
because the father of this *luve ni wai* came to Kambara.

According to informants, Luve ni Wai rites are carried on secretly in the 575
bush at night. The leader and the members of the cult oil their bodies and
dress in ceremonial tapa and wreaths. They take kava to the bush, sit in a
kava circle, and prepare the drink ceremonially. The first cup is poured on the
ground as an offering to the gods. The leader drinks first. The men call the
gods by means of prayers. When the gods come, each enters and possesses [785]
his votary. While possessed, the men are insensitive to physical pain. They
jump, dance, and club one another.

9: Bryan

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(1924) 1924

QQ6 Lau QQ6

FATLANGILALA I.

102
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0 1 2 3
Nautical Miles

S 16° 45'

Lighthouse
45'

Entrance

177° 10' W

177° 25' W

[p. 80]

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35. WAILANGILALA is a flat sand island underlain by coral limestone, a mile long and 600 yards wide at its widest ~~part~~ part. It is the most northern of the Lau Group, lying 18 miles N.E.W. from Kimbombo Islets. (S.16° 45', 179° 06' W.). The island is surrounded by a barrier reef, 2 1/2 miles wide (E.& W.) by 3 3/4 miles N.& S. Thru this there is an entrance on the west 240 yards wide which admits vessels into the lagoon, where good anchorage may be found.

The island is thickly covered with littoral plants and coconut palms, reaching a total height of 70 feet above sea level. Toward the north there is a bare narrow isthmus, with a wooded section beyond, giving the appearance of two islands.

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On the S.W. side is a 95 foot circular, white iron tower, with a flashing white light, visible 15 miles. The lighthouse keeper and his assistant have neat substantial homes near by. They cultivate small garden plots and dry copra from the extensive coconut grove. Some Rain vegetables and papayas may be obtained. Water is stored in a tank.

[312]

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An account of a boring made on this island in 1897 is given by Alexander Agassiz in the Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Vol. XXXIII, pp.45 to 48, 1899. The island must have changed considerably in shape since that time, as it does not at present agree with maps given on pages 45 and 46. Even the position of the light-house is different.

[p.81]

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133



(Bottom)

45. Bedded tuff formation in the north cliff of middle Kimbombo islet.



46. Wallangilala I. from the S.W. The island is low and sandy, rising to a height of 70 feet to the tops of the coconut palms. The lighthouse is at the left.

[p. 109]

78

THE LAU ISLANDS

115 Mavana, and 'tis only fished about once in three
226 years."

[778] "Tell me all about it," I said, scenting a good tale.

Then Rusiate turned to me and began.

"My mother is of Mavana town, so that I count with Vanua Balavu, and, indeed, have only lately come back here to live at Doi, my father's land. And I am of the *matagali* (tribe) that catch the sacred fish. And the catching of it is thus." When it appears to the priest (that is, of course, to the descendant of the old priests, for there are no heathen priests to-day," he added, hastily) "that the time has arrived for the fishing, he goes to inform Tui Mavana, who is the great chief of all the northern half of Vanua Balavu, the long island. And Tui Mavana gathers together his people, and they take their canoes and work round the coast till they arrive at the deep bay of Masomo. There they disembark, and climb up the sloping hill-side, through the woods, till they come to the marsh of the *yawa*.

• [349] Then a *buré bolabola* (rough harbour or shelter) is put up at the edge of the swamp and the priest

[793] retires inside it. The priest to-day is Juta, the son of Eroni." (I was quietly amused at this naïve confession.) "Then *Yaqona* is made, with much

[276] ancient ceremony; and after that a *lovo* (oven of heated stones) of food is prepared, and a

NIGHT SCENE ON NAYAU ISLAND 99

dered with shady bread-fruit trees and carpeted 123
 with beautifully kept short turf, we came suddenly 574
 in the darkness upon an avenue of living torch- [516]
 holders, all seated cross-legged as a mark of [576]
 respect, and holding aloft their flaring torches of
 tied up reeds. In each man's hand was a piece [416]
 of broad banana leaf, hollowed to form a cup,
 and filled with sand, into which the dropping
 fiery fragments of the torch were caught. The
 dancing lights threw into strong relief the powerful
 features of the men, sitting silent as a row of
 graven images; while dimly in the shadows
 behind could be seen rows of spectators, men,
 women, and children, all silent and motionless
 until we reached the appointed spot, when, at a
 given signal by the chief, the deep *tama* was given
 by a hundred throats, a sound impossible to set
 down on paper, but not unlike a long-drawn
 exclamation, "o-o-a."

Taking our seats at one end of this double [349] ●
 line, beneath a square canopy of bamboos and
 many-fronded palm leaves, we found that all was
 in readiness for the *Kavakavanua*, or ceremony. 431
 First of all appeared at the far end of the line a 123
 pair of very old men, facing us and kneeling 574
 side by side, and holding up on their folded arms [481]
 a small oblong *tabakau*, or mat of woven coco-nut [285]
 leaves. They then advanced, still on their knees,
 and in perfect time, progressing by a curious